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Motherland

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Dr. Susan A. Cole, President
Daniel Gurskis, Dean, College of the Arts
Jedediah Wheeler, Executive Director, Arts & Cultural Programming

American Premiere!

Vincent Dance Theatre
MOTHERLAND

Directed and Designed by **Charlotte Vincent**
Music by **Alex Catona, Patrycja Kujawska, Aurora Lubos, Scott Smith, Leah Yeger,**
and **Charlotte Vincent**; “Why Oh Why” by **Woodie Guthrie**
Devised and Performed by **Andrea Catania, Alex Catona, Robert Clark,**
Greig Cooke, Patrycja Kujawska, Aurora Lubos, Janusz Orlik, Joan Plunkett,*
Scott Smith, Leah Yeger
Text by **Charlotte Vincent** and **Liz Aggiss**
Dramaturg **Ruth Ben-Tovim**
Production Manager **Dom Martin**
Sound Engineer **Francis Gardner**
*Joan Plunkett’s role was originally devised and performed by Benita Oakley.

Original Research for *Motherland* by **Liz Aggiss, Alex Catona, Robert Clark,**
Greig Cooke, Wendy Houstoun, Kip Johnson, Patrycja Kujawska, Luisa Lazzaro,
Aurora Lubos, Emily Maynard, Claudia Molitor, Benita Oakley, Janusz Orlik, Toby Park,
Fernanda Prata, Jo Shapland, Scott Smith, Leah Yeger, Charlotte Vincent

Motherland is commissioned by Brighton Dome and Festival, Corn Exchange Newbury, South East Dance, The Point Eastleigh, and Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ).

Charlotte Vincent is Resident Artist at South East Dance. Vincent Dance Theatre (VDT) is Associate Company at Brighton Dome. VDT and Yorkshire Dance are Artistic Partners. VDT is a National Portfolio Organisation, funded by Arts Council England.

Duration: 2 hours 10 minutes, no intermission.

In consideration of both audience and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted in the theater.

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Montclair State's **Office of Arts & Cultural Programming** (ACP) presents and produces leading artists of the world in dance, music, theater, and opera. Under its signature series Peak Performances, ACP has produced works such as *Zinnias: The Life of Clementine Hunter* by Robert Wilson, Bernice Johnson Reagon, Toshi Reagon, and Jacqueline Woodson; *Dog Days* by David T. Little and Royce Vavrek; Harry Partch's *Oedipus*; and Ridge Theater's *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* by David Lang. In addition, ACP has commissioned works by Bill T. Jones, Kronos Quartet, Jan Fabre, Liz Lerman, Wayne McGregor, Laurie Anderson, Romeo Castellucci, Richard Alston, Susan Marshall, Fred Hersch, and David Gordon.

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The 2013/14 season is made possible in part by funds from:

- The National Endowment for the Arts
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To view our complete season and for more information, visit peakperfs.org.



Photo by Alastair Muir

October 17-20, 2013
Alexander Kasser Theater

 **MONTCLAIR STATE**
UNIVERSITY

Program Notes

Motherland is a visually stark set of images in black and white that reveal the complex internal and external relationships that women have with their bodies, with their sense of self, and with men.

Motherland breathes life into stagnant stereotypes, embraces societal archetypes, and investigates form. Set against a contemporary media context of vacuously plastic, over-sexualized images of girls and women who seem untouched by age, injury, or pregnancy, *Motherland* explores the spectrum of masculinity and femininity, questioning how women take up space, find a voice, make some noise.

Driven by sex, birth, and death, the work sees men in transition and women failing to find any visible power—grown adults crawling in and out of the dirt. By the end of the work, performers are soiled by sweat, blood, and earth. It's the stuff of life.

A 13-year-old girl, on the cusp of womanhood, threads through the piece, taking it all in, seeking to make sense of what she sees, treading a delicate path. Offering no easy answers, *Motherland* asks: how shall we clean up our act for the next generation?

Motherland is dedicated to the memory of choreographer/performer Nigel Charnock, 1960–2012, whose fearless energy inspired a generation of dance makers to take emotional and physical risks. This production is for M, who held my hand for four long years as the blood spilled and shocks hit and the tears kept falling.

—Charlotte Vincent, Director

About the Artists

Charlotte Vincent (Director/Choreographer/Curator/Producer) formed Vincent Dance Theatre (VDT) in 1994 and has directed all the company's work to date. Vincent performed with VDT until 2002 and has designed the company's work since 2005. She has also choreographed new productions for dance companies in the UK, Germany, Taiwan, and Spain and worked with filmmakers the Quay Brothers to create *Overworlds & Underworlds*, a site-specific work with Phoenix Dance Theatre as part of the Leeds Cultural Olympiad Project in 2012. In 2012 Vincent also curated Juncture, a festival of experimental, female-led performance and practice at Yorkshire Dance, Leeds.

Vincent teaches professional development extensively across the UK and directs and facilitates a range of community engagement projects. She regularly works as a mentor for emerging artists in the UK and as a dramaturg for other artists' work. She collaborates and performs with Professor Liz Aggiss as V&A Artefacts and collaborates with Dr. Claire MacDonald to curate The Table (thetable.org.uk). Vincent is committed to raising the profile of female-led arts practice in the UK and is regularly asked to chair and facilitate discussion and debate around gender inequality in the arts. She was on the Artists Advisory Group at Yorkshire Dance and Steering Group for Dance UK's National Choreographic Conference in May 2013. She completed a Clore Leadership Short Course (2010), the Clore Programme for CEO/Artistic Directors (2011), and Clore Brave Conversations Programme (2013).

Andrea Catania (Performer) is a dancer, actress, and choreographer from Costa Rica who started her career in San José at age 5 with Uruguayan ballet teacher Cristina Gigurey. At the same time, she started taking acting classes with Maria Catania, her aunt and a

renowned children's theater teacher. At 17 she joined the National Dance Company's Youth Group, directed by Mimi Gonzalez. In 1996 Catania was asked to join Losdenmedium Contemporary Dance Company, directed by Jimmy Ortiz. She was an exchange student at the Centre National de Danse Contemporaine in Angers, France, in 1998 before joining Folkwang Hochschule in Essen, Germany, graduating in 2003. She has also graduated from the National University of Costa Rica in Performing Arts/Dance. Catania has collaborated with Juan Kruz Díaz de Garaio Esnaola, Luc Dunberry, Stephanie Thiersch, and Joachim Schlömer. Her own prize-winning choreographies have been met with great reviews in Spain, Germany, and Costa Rica.

Alex Catona (Composer/Performer), born and raised in Romania, started out playing classical cello and studying composition. The work of artists like Ornette Coleman, Jackson Pollock, John Coltrane, Derek Bailey, Bill Dixon, Edward Kienholz, Ken Jacobs, Keiji Haino, and Andrei Tarkovski helped him find his own improvisational language. Catona has composed and performed in interdisciplinary theater and film projects, collaborating with Samir Akika, Markus Michailovski, Norbert Steinwartz, Janet Archer, Lorca Renoux, Alfredo Catania, Hans Klohe, Hernan Jimenez, and Jose Arce. In 2004 Catona met Charlotte Vincent at Rui Horta's COLINA project in Portugal, and in 2005 he performed in *Swim Like a Goldfish*, directed by Janet Archer, at Dance City, Newcastle. *Broken Chords* was Catona's first collaboration with Vincent Dance Theatre as a performer and composer. In 2007 he took part in Stand Up, a period of research with Vincent Dance Theatre in London and Portugal, and in 2009 he composed the soundtrack for *If We Go On*, performing in the work on tour.

Robert Clark (Performer), from the UK, trained at the Laban Centre and London Contemporary Dance School with EDge. He has worked with Sasha Waltz & Guests, Cie Felix Ruckert, Cie Soit/Hans Van den Broek, Le Grand Jeu/Louis Zeigler, Charles Linehan, Lisa Torun Dance Company, Bare Bones (Rui Horta, Garry Stewart/Australian Dance Theatre), Ben Wright's bgroup, and Troika Ranch, among others. He is an associate artist with Dance4, Nottingham. In 2003 Clark was awarded the Simone Michelle Choreography Award from Laban and in 2004 received a Dance UK Choreographic Observership to work with Siobhan Davies. Recent commissions include work on third-year students at London Contemporary Dance School (2011) and Dance4's Graduate Training Company (2011) and the University of Bedfordshire. Clark's choreography has been performed at Nottdance, Springloaded, Springdance, Tanztage, and Bmotion and in venues in London, Nottingham, Berlin, Venice, Mulhouse, Bouxwiller, Utrecht, and Bassano. Clark joined Vincent Dance Theatre in 2008 for *Broken Chords*.

Greig Cooke (Performer), from the UK, graduated from London Contemporary Dance School in 1995 with a postgraduate diploma in Contemporary Dance and subsequently performed internationally with Charles Linehan, Lea Anderson, and Mark Bruce. He has also worked with Adventures in Motion Pictures on *Swan Lake*, Aletta Collins, Random Dance, Arthur Pita, Tom Sapsford, Fleur Darkin, and the reworking of Peter Shaffer's *Equus* in 2007. In 2005 he took the role of rehearsal director for The Featherstonehaughs on their reworking of *Flesh and Blood*, was in *Comma 39*, directed by art filmmaker Stuart Croft and choreographed by Ben Wright, and collaborated with Antonia Grove on *Running on Empty*. As a teacher, Cooke enjoys working with different age groups and abilities and teaches extensively in the UK, delivering workshops and regular classes to schools, boys' groups, professionals, over-50s, and vocational dance schools.

Patrycja Kujawska (Composer/Performer) studied at Academy of Music in Gdansk, Poland, graduating in violin. Before moving to the UK in 2005, she worked extensively with the physical theater companies Dada von Bzdülów, City Theatre in Gdynia, and Non-Cabaret in the Baltic Sea Cultural Centre. She danced in shows choreographed by Tatiana Baganova and Avi Kaiser. Kujawska wrote music for the short dance animation film *Face: Soundtrack for Sculptures*, inspired by the work of French sculptor Sabrina Gruss, and co-composed the music for Vincent Dance Theatre's *Test Run*. Since 2008 she has worked with Kneehigh Theatre on shows including *Don John* (co-production with Royal Shakespeare Company), *Midnight's Pumpkin*, *The Red Shoes*, *The Wild Bride*, and *Tristan & Yseult*. For Vincent Dance Theatre she has made and toured *Drop Dead Gorgeous* (2001), *Let the Mountains Lead You to Love* (2003), *Punch Drunk* (2004), *Broken Chords* (2005), *Fairy Tale* (2006), *Test Run* (2006–08), and *If We Go On* (2009).

Aurora Lubos (Composer/Performer), from Poland, has worked extensively with Dance Theatre of Gdansk and Dada von Bzdülów. She has collaborated with Avi Kaiser, Tatiana Baganova, Jerzy Mazzoli, and Bronek Duży. With Jacek Staniszewski, Oskar Martin, and

Patrycja Kujawska, she co-founded KLM'S Group and created *Te Takie Te*. In 2005 she was nominated for the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Lubos has created solo performances *Knife*, *Horse and Stairs*, *Unfinished*, and *Zanzibar* and installation/performances *Still Alive* and *Food Cycle* (2011), *Four corners* (2010), and *No 1* (2003) plus several short animations. Lubos first met Charlotte Vincent when she was invited to Gdansk to workshop choreographic ideas as part of the Baltic University of Dance's Winter Explosion Festival. For Vincent Dance Theatre Lubos has devised and performed in *Caravan of Lies* (1999), *Drop Dead Gorgeous* (2001), *Let the Mountains Lead You to Love* (2003), *Punch Drunk* (2004), *Broken Chords* (2005), *Fairy Tale* (2006), *Look at Me Now*, *Mummy* (2007), and *If We Go On* (2009).

Janusz Orlik (Performer), from Poland, is a graduate of the ballet school in Warsaw and was a student of Brucknerkonservatorium Linz, Austria. During his studies he became a founding member of the company x.IDA, dancing and touring internationally with the productions of choreographers such as Olga Cobos, Peter Mika, Catherine Guerin, Rebecca Murgi, Nicole Caccivio, and Charlotte Vincent, who invited him to join Vincent Dance Theatre in 2002. Orlik also choreographs his own work in Poland, making *Exerese Monobloc* (2004), *And thy neighbour as thyself* (2006), *Live on Stage* (2009), *The Rite of Spring* (2011), and *Insight* (2013). He took part in coaching projects with Nigel Charnock, Michael Schumacher, Bruno Pocheron, Jonathan Burrows, Yossi Berg, and Oded Graf and subsequently performed in Nigel Charnock's *Happy*. In 2010 he joined the show *Forces* with the Belgian Kwaad Bloed Company. In 2011 he joined Nigel Charnock + Company to create the new work *Ten Men*. In the same year he collaborated and performed in *Reconstruction* by Joanna Leśniewowska and in 2012 in *Horsemeat* by Gary Clarke. For Vincent Dance Theatre Orlik has made and toured *On the House* (2003), *Let the Mountains Lead You to Love* (2003), *Punch Drunk* (2004), *Broken Chords* (2005), *Test Run* (2006), and *If We Go On* (2009).

Joan Plunkett (Performer) was born in Dublin and pursued a teaching career before returning to university to study dance. After gaining an MA, she choreographed period and modern dances for plays by Chapman, Middleton, and Shakespeare. She then returned to teaching, at the same time periodically leading experimental movement workshops for The Hammer of Los Theatre Company. Since leaving teaching, she has concentrated on acting. Recent credits include *The House of Atreus* (Waterloo East Theatre and Seoul Fringe Festival); *Crime and Punishment* (The Lord Stanley); *O Crewel World* and *Discovering Dad* (Theatre 503); *The 9:21 to Shrub Hill* (New Diorama); *The Woman Who . . .*, *Transactions*, *Seems I've got too much...*, and *No Signal* (blank pages); *Games [For Two]* (The Kings Head); *The Lower Depths* (Pentameters); and *Antony and Cleopatra* (Battersea Arts Centre). Credits also include site-specific plays, immersive theater, rehearsed readings, and performance art. Plunkett has appeared in feature and short films, most recently *Parting* by award-winning director Gabriele Paoli.

Scott Smith (Composer/Performer) teaches, creates performances and live and recorded music, performs, and collaborates. He has studied and performed with

Steve Paxton via contact improvisation and material for the spine and currently makes duet work with Lisa Nelson. His training and professional experience include traditional and classical dance forms as well as new dance and improvisational focuses. Smith has performed with companies in New York, London, and Berlin, including Walker Dance Park Music, Yolande Snaith, Tanzfabrik, Bebe Miller, Dog Kennel Hill, Gravity and Levity, and, most recently, Vincent Dance Theatre. He is currently living in the UK, from where he teaches internationally, provides live music and recordings for dance and video, presents his own performance, movement, and sound work, and plays stringed instruments in bands and sessions. Smith is one of Brighton's Movement 12.

About the Company

Led by artistic director Charlotte Vincent, **Vincent Dance Theatre** (VDT) makes originally devised, collaboratively produced productions that tour the UK and Europe, Canada, and the United States. Since 1994, VDT has produced 18 dance theater works, short films, videos, interactive installations, and art publications, gaining a national and international reputation for creating strongly affecting productions with a crackling intellectual core. Unflinching in its desire to challenge and ask difficult questions, VDT's work is nonetheless approachable and inquiring—often strongly narrative rather than purely abstract—and with a distinctive humor and pathos combined.

VDT is a mature, experienced ensemble of international artists. The company places great emphasis on the personal contribution, individual physicality, and cultural backgrounds of all the collaborators involved. Polish performers Aurora Lubos, Janusz Orlik, and Patrycja Kujawska and Romanian composer/performer Alex Catona are core members of the company. VDT's work is cross-disciplinary in form and feminist in outlook, combining choreography, performance, scenography, text, and live music to challenge conventional values in dance and gender politics.

Over 19 years VDT has developed a hard-earned reputation for integrating extensive, intelligent programs of participation, critical debate, and professional development work into the company's activity, led by the artistic director and core company members. VDT creates a new middle-scale production every other year and in the intervening years re-tours and documents existing

Leah Yeger (Composer/Performer) is 13 and lives in Totnes, England. She enjoys performing, song writing, and singing. She has passed Grade 5 on the violin and is teaching herself guitar. She started dancing a year ago; she received an A* in 2013 in an extended General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) dance project and has been selected to do a fast-track GCSE in dance next year. She enjoys choreography as well as dancing. She loves the feeling of being on stage and is grateful for the opportunity to perform with Vincent Dance Theatre and be part of the company.

productions, produces smaller-scale works that test the boundaries of the form, curates international research projects, and engages in UK-wide industry research.

Charlotte Vincent regularly mentors emerging and mid-career practitioners, choreographs commissioned works for other companies, leads professional development programs, and works as a curator, lecturer, writer, provocateur, and catalyst for critical debate. VDT allies the management and structure of the organization to the ethos and collaborative nature of the work, celebrating mature practice, championing feminist politics, and creating conditions that enable mature dancers and performers who are also parents to return to work.

Vincent Dance Theatre

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